

Oct 24 2005 - Slaughter Hosts Meeting with Key Federal and Local Officials on Passport Proposal

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DHS, State Department, WNY Representatives, Community and Business Leaders Present

SLAUGHTER ASKS DHS TO EXTEND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today hosted a major Stakeholders Meeting on the controversial DHS Passport initiative.

"I hosted this meeting today because the people of our region deserve a solution to border security which won't hinder their economic security in the process," Rep. Slaughter said. "Complicating the lives of the people who live here isn't the answer to the problems confronting us. We cannot afford to choose between homeland security and economic prosperity. We must and can have both. " she added.

"The goal of this meeting was to clearly demonstrate to the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State that the New York and Canadian border communities are united in opposition to this proposed policy."

"All of the elected and community leaders here today joined me in clearly expressing their opposition directly to the DHS and State Department officials present at the meeting."

"The economic impact of new border policies must be taken into consideration. That is why it is so important for all New Yorkers to contact the Department of Homeland Security to register their comments and concerns during the public comment period. It is also why I have asked DHS to extend the public comment period," said Rep. Slaughter.

Senator Chuck Schumer attended the event, as did Representatives Brian Higgins and Thomas M. Reynolds. Also present were Buffalo Mayor Anthony Masiello and Vince Anello, the Mayor of Niagara Falls. Numerous officials from the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and local business and community leaders were also at the event.

A complete list of the individuals at the meeting can be found below:

Senator Charles Schumer

Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter

Congressman Thomas M. Reynolds

Congressman Brian Higgins

Mayor Anthony Masiello, Buffalo

Mayor Vince Anello, Niagara Falls

Elaine Dezenski, Acting Assistant Secretary for Border and Transportation Security and Policy, Department of Homeland Security

Keith Powell, Counselor for Consular Affairs, U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, Department of State

Tom Garlock, Niagara Falls Bridge Commission

Ron Reinas, Peace Bridge Commission

Tom Kraus, Niagara USA Chamber of Commerce

Luke Rich/Andrew Rudnick, Buffalo Niagara Partnership

Pat Whalen, CAN/AM Border Trade Alliance

Arlene White, Binational Tourism Alliance

Howard Zemsky, Buffalo Place

Niagara County Economic Development Office

Erie County Economic Development Office

Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation

Mayor Ted Salci, Niagara Falls, ON

Alan Teichrob, Niagara, Ontario Economic Development Corp.

Arlene White, Executive Director, Binational Tourism Alliance

John Maloney, Member of Parliament, Welland, Ontario

Rob Nicholson, Member of Parliament

Ken Woodruff, Niagara Parks Commission